

SERIOUS EXPOSTULATIONS

On occasion of a late extraordinary Resolution,

BY A

Member of the Common Council.

O miseri, quæ tanta insania, cives?
VIRG.



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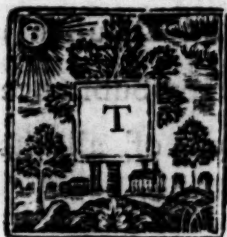
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SERIOUS EXPOSTULATIONS

On occasion of a late extraordinary Resolution.



THE powerful Reasons, that induced the Common Council of London, to compliment two late Ministers with the freedom of their City, would have remained a secret to the World, had not the great Orator, by whom they were urged with all that force of Elocution, for which

he is so deservedly admired, kindly published them in the News-Papers; at once to justify the Measure and give us a sample of his Eloquence.

Unacquainted with the Rules of Oratory, I leave to others to point out and admire the Propriety and Elegance of his Diction, the Boldness and Beauty; the Variety and Harmony of his Figures; whilst, (jealous of an Art justly deemed the Instrument of Error and Delusion,) I confine my Remarks to the Substance of his Argument, divested of all its Flowers and Ornaments.

The Orator is candid enough to admit the Appointment and Removal of Ministers to be the King's Prerogative, or to borrow his own sublime Words, *the Act*
of

Sacred Power and Sovereign Authority.

But what is the Conclusion? Why, plainly this (how artfully so ever it may be disguised) that HIS MAJESTY's having presumed to exercise this Prerogative in the present Instance without the Advice and Consent of his Great Council in Guild-Hall assembled, the said Council have a Right, and Policy requires them, to lament a Proceeding so unconstitutional, and by every mark of their Esteem for those, whom HIS MAJESTY has dismissed from his Service, to let the World know, that they disapprove of the Measure, and would have prevented it, if their Discretion, as well as their Duty had not required them *to be silent on that Head.* This Argument I confess is unanswerable, and

and therefore I must content myself with only asking a few Questions.

What have those Right-Honourable Gentlemen done to deserve such distinguishing Honors, and a Compliment so disrespectfull to *Sacred Power and Sovereign Authority* ?

The Orator's Speech affords us no Answer to this Question. But the Compliment itself (which one would almost be tempted to think had been penned by one of those to whom it was addressed) informs us ;

That their Conduct has been loyal and disinterested, during their short Administration, that in reducing the number of Place-men they have begun a Scheme of
publick

publick Oeconomy, and lessened the Extent of Ministerial Influence :

That they have used noble Efforts to stem a general Torrent of Corruption, and to revive, by their Example, the Love of Virtue and our Country :

That they have been zealous to promote a full and impartial Inquiry into the real Causes of our late Losses and Disgrace. And lastly, that they have been vigilant to support the Glory and Independance of Great-Britain ; the Honour and true Interest of the Crown and the Rights and Liberties of the Subject ; thereby most effectually securing the Affection of the People to HIS MAJESTY and his illustrious Family.

B

Now

Now (in the Name of common Sense) wherein has their Loyalty or their disinterestedness been thus eminently conspicuous? Was it in taking advantage of the Circumstances of the Times, and the Distresses of their King and Country, to force themselves into Administration: and when admitted there, assuming a dictatorial and exclusive Power? Was it in forming a family-Monopoly of all the most lucrative, as well as most important offices of the State? Did their Loyalty and Affection for their Sovereign appear in adding to his publick Cares, the Anxieties and Afflictions of domestic Distress? Their Duty and their Gratitude, their Love and Reverence for his Person, great as they themselves profess, are certainly due to his Virtues; to his paternal Tenderness for his People. How have they
 shewn

shewn them? By an open and insolent Opposition to his Measures, by personal Insults, while their zeal for his illustrious House was displayed in calumniating one Branch of it, infusing Jealousies into another, and sowing Dissentions amongst them all.

Wherein has their boasted Scheme of publick Oeconomy, and lessening the extent of Ministerial Influence appeared? Did either of them resign any part of their own great Sallaries, as an Example to their Dependents and Relations? What Benefit is the publick likely to receive from the Suppression of a little paultry Board, when the Officers of it are to have Pensions for Life, equal (at least) to their present Sallaries, whilst others must be paid for doing that, which was their Bu-

finess? Will they as Pensioners be less dependant than as Place-Men? A frugal Scheme, no doubt, of lessening the public Expence, and reducing the Exorbitance of ministerial Influence! In what Instances these noble Efforts for destroying Corruption have appeared, I confess myself totally ignorant, or indeed what opportunities, during their short Administration, the Gentlemen could have possibly found for exerting them.

Did their love of Virtue and their Country influence a single man amongst them to assist their distressed Country and quicken the necessary supplies by a liberal Supscription in the new Funds at a manifest Disadvantage of 12 *per Cent*? Was their zeal for the Inquiry always
real

real and impartial, or did they, at the risk of violating one of the fundamental Privileges of Parliament, and of injuring the Honor of their Sovereign, endeavour to screen a Man, whom the law of the Land, and the Civil as well as Military Judges had condemned? Is it certain that they still are serious in the Prosecution of others, against whose Conduct they once so loudly inveighed; or has some secret Compromise to secure their own return to Power abated the Violence of their great Love of Justice?

Wherein have they shewn their Vigilance to support the Glory and Independance of Great-Britain?

Does the Compliment, by the Independance of Great-Britain mean her
having

having no Connections, no Alliance upon the Continent? If it does—What a Reflection does it imply on the Policy of Elizabeth, who at so great an Expence fomented the Troubles of France and Flanders?—What an Encomium on the Wisdom of her immediate Successor, who permitted the formidable Growth of the House of Austria; and on the Patriotism of his two Grand-Sons, who suffered the more dangerous Agrandizement of the House of Bourbon?

Has not Experience (*the Touch-stone of Truth*) been yet able to convince the Common Council that Britain singly is not a Match for France, and can we reasonably expect Assistance from other Powers, if we lay it down as an invariable Maxim,

never

never to assist them in return? May not the Right-Honourable Gentlemen think themselves injured by having this absurd Principle imputed to them? Did not one of them, when formerly in Place, justify a subsidiary Measure, which he had before harranged against with equal Eloquence and Sincerity? And have they not, both of them this very Sessions, subsidized to a foreign, nay a German Prince? or would the Orator insinuate, and does he imagine any Man so weak as to believe, that because they began with £ 200000, our two popular Guardians meant to go no farther.

What have they done for the Honour and true Interest of the Crown? Had they any Merit in sending, or rather could they

they avoid sending those Forces to America, which had been raised by their Predecessors for that very Purpose? Was the return of the foreign Troops owing to the Vigilance of either of the Gentlemen, or to the Dangers and Distresses of their own Country? Was it to the King's Honour, that his Exchequer was for some days unable to answer the current Demands of those, who had advanced Money to the Publick upon the Malt and Land Tax?

In what single Instance have they supported the just Rights and Liberties of the Subject? For in what single Instance have their Rights and Liberties been attacked? Is not the Insinuation an Affront to Majesty? Is it not particularly
ungrateful

ungrateful to a King, who has always made the Laws, the rule of his Conduct? Is not the Compliment a delicate Reproof to the Gentleman, who violated the Rights of the People in one of the most essential privileges of their Representatives? If not in particular Instances, has the general Conduct of the Right-Honourable Gentlemen really tended to secure the Affections of the People, to his Majesty and his illustrious Family?

Are the Insinuations, which they have propagated, or at least left uncontradicted, (of their being the Victims of Hanover and the Martyrs of Great Britain) calculated to that pious End?

C

Was

Was it for him they associated themselves with Men, whose principles they formerly detested? And has their Eloquence been able to convert one of these, their new Friends, to the cause of Liberty and the Protestant Succession?

But why is the Motion totally silent about the Genius and Abilities of the two Patriots in Politics and the Finances? Has not their truly Honourable, tho' short Administration, furnished them with a single Instance of their Skill and Dexterity in either? Why is there no mention of the Protection given to our Trade and Navigation, during that happy Period? Could a mercantile Assembly forget these interesting Objects? or was it because the remembrance of them afforded no room for Panegyrick? Or was the Orator fearful
of

of advancing what the late immense Losses of our Merchants and Insurers so feelingly contradict? What then has called for these peculiar Honours? Was it that the two favourite Gentlemen were upon Tryal found unequal to the weight of Administration and were therefore dismissed from HIS MAJESTY's Service? Is not this a glaring Insult upon the Crown? Is it thus the City declare their Loyalty and Affection to their King, and their Love for *their* Country? Are such Declarations likely to compose our differences at home, and make us formidable abroad? But who is he, who thus presumes, tho' indirectly, to dictate to his Sovereign; thus declaims against Corruption, pretends to applaud Integrity, Loyalty and Disinterestedness; thus sounds the Alarm to his fellow Citizens? Was not the Motion
made

made by the publisher of that impartial History of England, compiled by the late Reverend and memorable Mr. Carte, who in the Reign of William the first has traduced the Revolution and attempted to prove the indefeazable hereditary Right of the Pretender to the Crown of this Kingdom by a String of pretended Miracles ? Are not they, who so earnestly solicited this measure the Men who voted a Pension to the Reverend Nonjuring Writer ? Are not some of these very disinterested Citizens squabbling amongst themselves for City Places and lucrative Jobbs ? Do such Characters reflect any Honor either upon those they praise, or those whom they persuade ?

Will not the Honest and Unwary, who have been drawn into this inflammatory Measure

Measure tremble to reflect, that their well-meaning Ancestors were by the like pretences to Virtue and Patriotism induced to take such steps as necessarily led to the Murder of their Sovereign and the ruin of their Church?

Does not History (*that key of Knowledge*) inform them, that many of those declamers were the secret Tools of France to improve the disaffection, which the Errors of that unhappy Reign had but too justly raised? But to conclude; let me only ask every Honest, every dispassionate Man, whether at all Times, it is not the Interest of King and People to unite, more particularly, when a powerful Enemy is at the Gate, and if it is not by such a Union alone, that we can hope to establish the Honour

nour, Safety and Prosperity of the British Empire?

May we not safely rest contented with the paternal regard, which His MAJESTY hath shewn to the just Complaints of his People, and from the Firmness, with which in a late Instance, he maintained his Promise to them, may we not confide in his Justice to punish any Ministers (who ever they may be) that shall presume to swerve from the Duty, they owe to Him and their Country?



